

For all their propaganda, and all their complaining to Congress, the nuclear utilities find a way to handle their waste, and keep reactors open and running.

The CEO of Northern States Power, John Howard, has said "Resolution of interim storage for spent nuclear fuel from our country's commercial power plants has reached crisis proportions."

Mr. Howard's assessment—that interim storage of nuclear waste is an impending crisis, and, thus, Congress must act to move this waste to Nevada as soon as possible—is a common theme in the nuclear power industry.

As the Prairie Island situation demonstrates, however, the crisis scenario is simply not true from a technical or scientific perspective.

Of course, I do not expect many of my colleagues will hear much about the resolution of the supposed crisis at Prairie Island.

The resolution of the Prairie Island waste situation simply does not track with the contrived crisis scenario developed by the nuclear power industry and its lobbyists.

To admit that nuclear utilities can find ways to take care of their own waste would shatter the carefully constructed fiction that interim storage in Nevada is the only possible alternative to shutting down the reactors.

It should be acknowledged that Northern States Power paid a price for the approval of additional storage at Prairie Island.

The debate over increased storage was intense, and many are still not happy.

NSP was forced to make concessions, such as building more renewable energy sources.

Other utilities are not anxious to go through what NSP went through.

The unfortunate fact for nuclear utilities is that nuclear power, and nuclear waste, are not popular.

The public relations and political problems associated with expanding storage capacity at reactors is an inescapable cost of nuclear power.

Northern States Power also paid a financial price for expanding storage at Prairie Island.

As other utilities do the same, especially after the 1998 goal for operation of a permanent repository included in the 1982 Nuclear Waste Policy Act, some action ought to be taken to provide some relief to the ratepayers who have paid in the first instance into the nuclear waste fund and who are not receiving the storage at that fund which they contemplated would be operational by the year 1998.

I might say parenthetically, as the distinguished occupant of the chair knows, under no scenario, under absolutely none, will a facility be opened by the year 1998.

So I believe as a matter of fairness that ratepayers are entitled to some relief in terms of payment into the nuclear waste fund.

I have reintroduced in this Congress, as I have on previous occasions, legisla-

tion which this year bears the number of S. 429 which will provide a credit against nuclear waste fund contributions for utilities forced to build on-site storage after 1998.

Under S. 429, ratepayers will not be financially penalized for the misguided and mismanaged efforts of the nuclear power industry and the Department of Energy to build a permanent repository in Nevada.

I urge my colleagues to reject the nuclear power industry's newest assault on the people of Nevada, and support S. 429.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KEMPTHORNE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills due their second reading.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 761

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the first bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 761) to improve the ability of the United States to respond to the international terrorist threat.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on this matter at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That bill will be placed on the calendar.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 790

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the second bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 790) to provide for the modification or elimination of Federal reporting requirements.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on this matter at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

DISASTERS

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, last Friday, President Clinton declared a major disaster for the State of Mississippi, due to damage resulting from severe storms, flooding, and related problems, weather problems that occurred on May 8 and during the days following. This declaration is deeply appreciated by the people of Mississippi and the State of Mississippi be-

cause very severe damage has occurred in our State as all of us know who had an opportunity to watch television and read about the devastating floods that occurred all across the gulf coast, from New Orleans to Mobile and beyond. Included in this area of severe weather damage was my State of Mississippi. All of the coast counties and some of those counties that are more inland received severe damage.

This declaration makes it possible now for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, led by James Lee Witt, to provide private, individual assistance to those disaster victims who qualify under Federal legislation. The letter also states that additional public assistance may be added at a later date.

It is my understanding that the Governor's office and his staff are working with Federal agents at this time in Mississippi, to try to ensure that all possible assistance, emergency and otherwise, is made available to these disaster victims. I commend the Governor and his staff for the fine work they are doing.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent a copy of the President's letter to our Governor, Kirk Fordice, be printed at this point in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, May 12, 1995.

Hon. KIRK FORDICE,
Governor of Mississippi,
State Capitol, Jackson, MS.

DEAR GOVERNOR FORDICE: As requested, I have declared a major disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act) for the State of Mississippi due to damage resulting from severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding on May 8, 1995, and continuing. I have authorized Federal relief and recovery assistance in the affected area.

Individual Assistance will be provided. Public Assistance may be added at a later date, if warranted. Consistent with the requirement that Federal assistance be supplemental, any Federal funds provided under the Stafford Act for Public Assistance will be limited to 75 percent of the total eligible costs in the designated areas.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will coordinate Federal assistance efforts and designate specific areas eligible for such assistance. The Federal Coordinating Officer will be Mr. Michael J. Polny of FEMA. He will consult with you and assist in the execution of the FEMA-State Disaster Assistance Agreement governing the expenditure of Federal funds.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, this also brings to mind legislation that I introduced recently to bring under the purview of the Public Safety Officers Benefits Act the employees of FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, as well as employees of State and local emergency management and civil defense agencies.

Senators may not realize this, but State and local police officers, firefighters, State and local rescue squads